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| **Date:** | 7 March 2012 |
| **Subject:** | Online learning supports carers |

Community support workers may soon be going online to learn the essential skills for administering medication to those in their care.

“With many support workers living and working some distance from their employer’s base, the *Smart Medicine* project is looking at ways to train and assess workers as competent in medication administration,” says project manager Kate Kempshall, of House with No Steps.

“This includes making sure they understand medication charts and can safely administer the medication.”

The project will develop the components for online delivery of medication training for regional and remote workers via the National Broadband Network (NBN). Using live streaming, DVDs and online learning materials, the training would include a pre-assessment survey to determine learners’ prior knowledge and a competency-based assessment that meets the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework.

Aimed at overcoming the common training limitations of time, distance and cost, this training environment would support learners to adapt to online learning and provide greater opportunities for personal and professional support. It would also be used for annual reviews of staff competency or in response to any medication incidents.

The project is being conducted by House with No Steps, a non-profit organisation and enterprise registered training organisation that provides services and support to the disability sector in New South Wales, Queensland and more recently the Australian Capital Territory. It offers employment, education, training, accommodation and social connection programs to 3,300 people with a disability across 160 locations.

This project has been made possible through funding from the National VET E-learning Strategy, whose NBN E-learning Programs provide opportunitiesto create innovative approaches to demonstrate the power of broadband to enhance outcomes for learners, and promote growth in broadband-based training as the NBN rollout proceeds.

“By providing an online learning environment that supports and educates support workers, this project will result in better care for those who need it most,” says National NBN Program Manager Lye Goh.

The National VET E-learning Strategy is the responsibility of the Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG), a key policy advisory group on national directions and priorities for information and communication technologies in the VET sector.

“Through this Strategy, we are supporting the development of e-learning programs that maximise the opportunities associated with the rollout of the NBN,” says FLAG Chair Raymond Garrand, Chief Executive of the South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

**Core statements for editorial use**

* The National VET E-learning Strategy 2012-2015 (‘the Strategy’) is aimed at strengthening the Australian training sector’s use of new learning technologies, stimulating innovative approaches to increasing participation in training and employment, and improving the skill levels of the Australian workforce
* Investment in the Strategy will stimulate innovative approaches to increasing participation in training and improve the skill levels of the Australian workforce
* To enable the three-year program of action, government funding has been approved to:
* capitalise on the rollout of the National Broadband Network by demonstrating the benefits of the national investment in broadband
* support large-scale workforce development in industry through partnerships and comprehensive e-learning advice
* expand participation and access for individuals through e-learning programs delivering foundation skills and e-literacy
* The Strategy is managed by the Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG), a key policy advisory group on national directions and priorities for information and communication technologies in the VET sector
* The chair of FLAG is Mr Raymond Garrand, Chief Executive of the South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

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